

## Architectural Review

### Emerson Homes

Topsfield, MA

#### Building

- The building borders residential neighborhoods and the town's historic district. The building could reflect that context more effectively if the building's large scale were broken down with some modest detailing. This is especially an issue for the north and south elevations, and for the main roof which is particularly monolithic and imposing. There is some attempt at mitigating this with the four apartments at the end of each of the two wings of the building that are articulated with an offset on the north and south exterior facades and on the interior with a jog in the circulation corridor. Further articulation is achieved with gables. This really helps to reduce the massing of the two ends of the building. Some attempt at doing this with the main roof and elevations of the building would help the overall presentation.
- What are the two roof cutouts on the back side of the building?
- What makes the roof areas on the front side of the building "solar ready?" Is there a plan for pursuit of a solar installation?
- The attic appears to offer a lot of found space (or wasted space, depending on how one looks at it). Is there a plan for its use? Can second floor units be given higher ceilings?
- Is there an information that can be provided at this point related to energy efficiency?
  - Heating and cooling
  - Insulation
  - Window specs
- Why don't first floor units have direct access to the outside? Wouldn't that be a desirable amenity? And even just a modest piece of hardscape for these units would allow a resident to have a grill and a couple of chairs.
- Common Room – what sort of amenities will this space be provided with?
- Nomenclature for identifying cross-sections on the drawings are inconsistent:
  - Floorplans (sheets A1.01, A1.02) reference building sections with numbers 1, 2, and 3 on sheet A4.01, but sheet A4.01 uses both numbers and letters A, B, and C.
  - Roof Plan (A1.03) has no section references.
  - Sheet 1.01 indicates the longitudinal section starts in the center of the building near the Common Area and extends down each of the two wings and through the exterior wall at the end of each wing, while Sheet 1.02 starts the longitudinal section outside the exterior wall, not inside at the center of the building.

#### Site

- How feasible is expansion of EV charging stations if demand is greater than 2?
- With the exception of the reference to a patio behind the building, site features are not delineated.
  - Exterior building lighting (designed to avoid glare perceived from adjoining properties)

- Site lighting (designed to avoid glare perceived from adjoining properties)
  - Signage
  - Site amenities like benches and bicycle racks
- Can a community garden be provided?